

The Pequest Trout Hatchery & Natural Resource Education Center is operated by the Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife. The hatchery is on Rt. 46 in Warren County and is open every day for visitors.



The hatchery raises 700,000 brook, brown and rainbow trout annually. The hatchery and education center are funded through the sale of fishing and hunting licenses and trout stamps.



The Natural Resource Education Center includes an exhibit hall with exhibits about the hatchery and natural resources. Interpretive programs are offered throughout the year.



Trout are on display indoors, as well as a variety of wildlife mounts that show wildlife associated with trout streams. A short film “Hooked on Nature” can be viewed which provides an overview of the hatchery operation.



Fishing education classes are provided for families and groups. The basic program covers fishing skills including casting.



The class includes an opportunity to fish for trout in the Education Pond.



A self-guided tour of the hatchery shows how the trout are raised. Fish food is available to feed the fish in our front raceway.



The broodstock building houses the breeders -- 2,000 of each species of trout -- that supply all of the eggs and sperm for the cycle to continue each year.



The production year begins in September. Eggs from female trout, and milt from the males are stripped from the anesthetized fish, mixed in a bowl, and placed in the incubator trays. The breeders are not harmed by this and spend several years at the hatchery before being released in state waters.



Visitors can look inside the nursery building to see the incubator room (where the eggs are hatched) and the tanks where the fingerlings spend their first 6 months.



The incubator room contains a series of trays that enable water to trickle through, keeping the eggs constantly supplied with cold, well-oxygenated water.



In the nursery, the growing fingerlings are housed in large tanks. They stay in the nursery until the end of May.



Trout spend about a year growing in the raceways. An observation platform allows visitors to watch the fish as they are fed in the raceways.



An “aquaharvester” fish pump sucks up water and fish to move them between raceways, or to load them for stocking. This also minimizes handling and stress to the fish.



All of the fish raised are stocked in public waters for recreational anglers.



Trout fishing is enjoyed by more than 100,000 New Jersey residents, and trout fishing adds millions of dollars each year to local economies when anglers take trips to go fishing.



Our goal is to not only raise trout for angling, but to build an appreciation for wildlife and its habitat and develop good stewards of that resource.

